

Israeli strikes on southern Gaza city of Rafah kill 22, mostly children, as US advances aid package

STATE TIMES NEWS
RAFIAH: Israeli strikes on the southern Gaza city of Rafah overnight killed 22 people, including 18 children, health officials said Sunday, as the United States was on track to approve billions of dollars of additional military aid to Israel, its close ally.

Israel has carried out nearly-daily air raids on Rafah, where more than half of Gaza's population of 2.3 million has sought refuge from fighting elsewhere. It has also vowed to expand its ground offensive against the Hamas militant group to the city on the border with Egypt despite international calls for restraint, including from the US.

"In the coming days, we will increase the political and military pressure on Hamas because this is the only way to bring back our hostages and achieve victory. We will land more and painful blows on Hamas - soon," Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said in a statement. He didn't give details.

The first Israeli strike in Rafah killed a man, his wife and their 3-year-old child, according to the nearby

Kuwaiti Hospital, which received the bodies. The woman was pregnant and the doctors managed to save the baby, the hospital said.

The second strike killed 17 children and two women, all from an extended family, according to hospital records. Mohammed al-Beheiri said his daughter, Rasha, and her six children, the youngest 18 months old, were among those killed. Her husband's second wife and their three children were still under the rubble, al-Beheiri said.

The Israel-Hamas war has killed over 34,000 Palestinians, according to local health officials, devastated Gaza's two largest cities and left a swath of destruction.

Around 80 per cent of the territory's population have fled to other parts of the besieged coastal enclave.

The USD 26 billion aid package approved by the House of Representatives on Saturday includes around \$9 billion in humanitarian assistance for Gaza, which experts say is on the brink of famine. The Senate could pass the package as soon as Tuesday, and President Joe Biden has

promised to sign it immediately.

The conflict, now in its seventh month, has sparked regional unrest pitting Israel and the US against Iran and allied militant groups across the Middle East.

Israel and Iran traded fire directly this month, raising fears of all-out war between the longtime foes.

Tensions have also spiked in the Israeli-occupied West Bank. Israeli troops killed two Palestinians who the military says attacked a checkpoint with a knife and a gun near the southern West Bank town of Hebron early Sunday.

The Palestinian Health Ministry said the two killed were 18 and 19, from the same family. No Israeli forces were wounded, the army said.

The Palestinian Red Crescent rescue service meanwhile said it had recovered 14 bodies from an Israeli raid in the Nur Shams urban refugee camp in the West Bank that began late Thursday.

Those killed include three militants from the Islamic Jihad group and a 15-year-old boy. The military said it killed 10 militants in the camp and arrested eight suspects. Nine Israeli soldiers and officers were wounded.

In a separate incident in the West Bank, an Israeli man was wounded in an explosion Sunday, the Magen David Adom rescue service said.

A video circulating online shows a man approaching a Palestinian flag planted in a field. When he kicks it, it appears to trigger an explosive device.

At least 469 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli soldiers and settlers in the West Bank since the start of the war in Gaza, according to the Palestinian Health Ministry. Most have been killed during Israeli military raids, which often trigger gunbattles, or in violent protests.

The war in Gaza was sparked by an unprecedented October 7 raid into southern Israel in which Hamas and other militants killed around 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and abducted around 250 hostages. Israel says militants are still hold-

ing around 100 hostages and the remains of more than 30 others.

Thousands of Israelis have taken to the streets to call for new elections to replace Netanyahu and a deal with Hamas to release the hostages. Netanyahu has vowed to continue the war until Hamas is destroyed and all the hostages are returned.

The war has killed at least 34,097 Palestinians and wounded another 76,980, according to the Gaza Health Ministry. The ministry does not differentiate between combatants and civilians in its count but says at least two-thirds have been children and women. It also says the real toll is likely higher as many bodies are stuck beneath the rubble or in areas that medics cannot reach.

Israel blames Hamas for civilian casualties because the militants fight in dense, residential neighbourhoods. The military rarely comments on individual strikes, which often kill women and children. The military says it has killed over 13,000 Hamas fighters, without providing evidence.

Student outreach initiative drives school students onto Namo Bharat trains, says NCR transport body

STATE TIMES NEWS
NEW DELHI: The National Capital Region Transport Corporation's (NCRRTC) student outreach programme drives school students onto Namo Bharat trains in order to enhance their awareness about the regional rapid transit system (RRTS), a statement said on Sunday.

As part of this initiative, school students were invited to participate in rides aboard the state-of-the-art Namo Bharat trains.

This immersive experience not only acquainted the students with the cutting-edge technology and comfort of the Namo Bharat, but also underscored the importance of sustainable and efficient transportation solutions for the National Capital Region (NCR), it said.

This initiative has been a resounding success, with students from across the NCR actively participating in various educational activities aimed at familiarising them with the RRTS corridor. The outreach programme encompasses school visits, knowledge sessions, painting competitions, nukkad natak (street plays), and most notably, exhilarating train

rides on the Namo Bharat, the statement stated.

Recognising the pivotal role children play as ambassadors for societal initiatives, the NCRRTC has made concerted efforts to engage with these school children to make the awareness program engaging and interactive. It includes a painting competition with a specific theme related to the project, it said.

They have been shown interactive videos to enhance their understandings. The children were encouraged to actively participate by sharing their understanding of the project. The session concluded with a street play that delivered key messages related to the project, it stated.

These outreach programmes served as platforms for the students to not only



learn about the RRTS project but also expressed their creativity and understanding through various mediums. By fostering an environment of curiosity and participation, NCRRTC aimed to instil a sense of ownership and enthusiasm among the younger generation towards embracing the Namo Bharat trains as a preferred mode of transport in the future, the statement said.

Presently, a 34-km section between Sahibabad and Modi Nagar North of the Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut RRTS corridor, which includes eight stations, is operational for passengers. The construction is advancing swiftly on the remaining stretches and the entire 82-km corridor is anticipated to be operational by 2025, it added.

BJP chief Nadda accuses CM Siddaramaiah of 'diluting' Neha Hiremath murder case

STATE TIMES NEWS
HUBBALLI: BJP National President J P Nadda on Sunday accused Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and state Home Minister Dr G Parameshwara of "influencing and diluting" the investigation into the murder of MCA student Neha Hiremath, which rocked the twin-city of Hubballi-Dharwad four days ago.

Neha, the daughter of Congress Councillor of Hubballi-Dharwad Municipal Corporation Niranjana Hiremath, was stabbed to death by her former classmate Fayaz Khondunak on the campus of BVB College on April 18. As communal allegations were made, Siddaramaiah clarified that personal reasons were behind the murder while Parameshwara said there was no "love jihad" angle as alleged by the BJP.

"Look at the statements of Siddaramaiah and Parameshwara. Some say it's a normal incident, others call it an accident. You want to influence and dilute the investigation. You don't have the courage to call a spade a spade due to your appeasement politics," Nadda alleged, addressing a public meeting here in



Hubballi.

Accusing the Congress government of encouraging anti-national activities, he wondered whether the people ever imagined that pro-Pakistan slogans would be raised in the corridors of Vidhana Soudha - a case that's under investigation and has not been proved.

"Aren't Siddaramaiah, D K Shivakumar and Rahul Gandhi ashamed when they say they will conduct an inquiry and do not trust the (private lab's) forensic report (on alleged Pro-Pak slogans)?" Nadda asked.

The BJP president alleged that due to the "appeasement politics", Congress leaders were shy of even condemning "anti-national" incidents.

He alleged that Karnataka is sitting on a bomb, referring to the March 1 blast in

Rameshwaram Café that injured 10 people.

"You (people) installed the Congress government in the state. Now you have realised that there is a tax on temples. Did you ever imagine this will happen? Did you ever think that people singing Hanuman Chalisa will be beaten up?," he asked referring to certain allegations. "Karnataka that was peaceful is now sitting on a bomb? Do you know that Congress is supporter and sympathiser of PFI and SDPI," Nadda asked, making allegations. He also took a dig at Congress's Bengaluru Rural candidate D K Suresh, who is the brother of Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar, for his alleged statement that southern states should get separate nationhood.

What Modi govt did in 10 years, Cong could not do in 60 years: Anurag Thakur

STATE TIMES NEWS
CHANDIGARH: Union minister Anurag Thakur on Sunday said what the BJP-led government did for the country in the past 10 years, the Congress could not do in 60 years of its rule as he slammed the grand old party.

Thakur also asserted that the Modi government is "pro-farmer" and said the BJP-led dispensation took many steps towards the welfare of the farming community.

Addressing the media in Jalandhar district, Thakur also hit out at the AAP dispensation in Punjab over the issue of law and order and drug menace.

The AAP had promised "nasha mukt" (drug-free) Punjab but now the state it has rather turned into "nasha yukt", he alleged.

On objections raised by opposition parties over the change in the colour of the logo of Doordarshan News from red to orange, the information and broadcasting minister asked why they hate 'kesri' colour and said

it was the then I&B minister Indira Gandhi who had selected the logo of the public broadcaster.

The change in the colour of the logo of Doordarshan News from red to orange has sparked off a political row, with the opposition terming it as "grossly illegal" and reflecting a "pro-BJP bias". The public broadcaster unveiled the "new look" DD News last week.

Thakur listed out various works undertaken during the Modi regime in the past 10 years.

He said the number of airports in the country were 74 in 2014 which now increased to 150 while the length of national highways jumped from 96,000 km in 2014 to 1.50 lakh km.

"There were only seven AIIMS and now there are 22. There were 16 IIMs and now there are 23. There were 380 medical colleges and now 706, there were 484 universities and today the number increased to 1,100," he said.

On steps taken for the

Sikh community, Thakur said the Modi government built the Kartarpur corridor" which links Gurdwara Darbar Sahib in Pakistan, the final resting place of Sikhism founder Guru Nanak Dev, to Dera Baba Nanak shrine in Gurdaspur district.

The government built a ropeway in Hemkund Sahib, brought copies of the Guru Granth Sahib from Afghanistan, announced 'Veer Bal Diwas' to mark the martyrdom day of the sons of tenth Sikh Guru and setting up a special investigation team for the 1984 anti-Sikh riots, among other, he said.

"What the Modi government did in 10 years for Punjab and the country could not be done by the Congress in 60 years," the Union minister said.

On the allegations that the Constitution will be changed and democracy will end if the BJP comes to power again, he pointed out that it was the Congress governments at the Centre which amended the

Constitution 62 times.

The Union minister claimed that the first phase of the voting in the Lok Sabha polls was in favour of the BJP.

"Today, the Congress is struggling to cross 40 seats," he said.

Replying to a question on farmers' ongoing protest in support of their various demands at Shambhu and Khanauri border points in Punjab, Thakur said the Modi government is "pro-farmer" which had listened to their issues and accepted the majority of their demands.

Thakur stated that the Modi government spent Rs 18.40 lakh crore on procurement of crops at minimum support price in the past 10 years as against Rs 5.50 lakh crore spent by the then Congress-led UPA government during 2004-2014.

He also said Rs 3 lakh crore was spent on Kisan Samman Nidhi and Rs 1.50 lakh crore compensation was given under Fasal Bima Yojana.

Asked whether farmers' protest could impact BJP's prospects in the polls in Punjab, Thakur stated that the Modi government did not let any shortage of fertilizers, made purchase of their crops, transferred money in their bank accounts, gave them compensation and Samman Nidhi.

"If there is no deficiency from our side, then why this opposition," he asked.

Notably, farmers owing allegiance to various farmer bodies have been protesting against the BJP candidates in Punjab.

Farmers under the banner of Samyukta Kisan Morcha have already said that they will oppose the BJP and will ask people to "punish" the saffron party in the Lok Sabha polls.

The SKM (Non-Political) and Kisan Mazdoor Morcha are spearheading the 'Delhi Chalo' march by farmers to press the government to accept their demands which include that the Centre should give a legal guarantee of MSP for crops.

INDIA bloc has done well in first phase of Lok Sabha polls, claims Cong's Digvijaya Singh

STATE TIMES NEWS
BHOPAL: The opposition INDIA bloc has done well in the first phase of Lok Sabha polls held across the country on April 19, senior Congress leader Digvijaya Singh claimed on Sunday.

Singh was fielded by the Congress from his home turf Rajasthan in Madhya Pradesh.

"Good news is coming for INDIA bloc from several places in the first phase of Lok Sabha polls. BJP is not getting the success they expected in their strongholds. They are nervous," Singh told reporters in Agari village, which is part of Chachoda assembly segment under Rajgarh LS seat. He claimed Union Minister and BJP heavyweight Nitin Gadkari "is in trouble" in Nagpur, though he did not elaborate. Two-time MP Gadkari is pitted against the Congress' Vikas Thakre in Nagpur Lok Sabha seat.

The BJP used to speak about "Congress-mukt Bharat" but the ruling party itself has become

"Congress-yukt" as half of its candidates in the general elections are defectors from the grand old party, the former MP chief minister claimed.

"Those who are working hard for the party (BJP) from the time of Jana Sangh or Congress from RSS are continuing to do the same work. (But) Modi ji (Prime Minister Narendra Modi) and (Union Home Minister) Amit Shah ji fielded imported leaders, not important ones. This proved their bankruptcy," he said.

Asked if Rahul Gandhi is the PM candidate of the Congress-led Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance, Singh said this election is about saving democracy and the Constitution and not about a chair.

The Rajya Sabha MP also said BJP workers distributing images of Lord Ram during polls was a violation of the model code of conduct, but added "whom to complain as the Election Commission is supporting them (BJP) openly".

Kejriwal didn't raise insulin issue with AIIMS specialists, say Tihar authorities

STATE TIMES NEWS
NEW DELHI: The Tihar administration arranged a video conference of Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal with senior specialists from AIIMS during which neither "the issue of insulin was raised by Kejriwal, nor was it suggested by the doctors", prison authorities said on Sunday.

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) has accused the Tihar administration of denying insulin to Kejriwal, who suffers from diabetes. The party has also alleged a "conspiracy" to "kill" him.

The Tihar administration, in a statement on Sunday, said appropriate senior specialists from AIIMS provided consultation to Kejriwal through video conference on Saturday.

"After a 40-minute detailed consultation, Kejriwal was assured that there was no serious concern and was advised to continue with the prescribed medicines, which will be evaluated and reviewed regularly," a jail official said.

The video conference was organised by the Tihar Jail administration on a request by Kejriwal's wife Sunita Kejriwal. Apart from a senior specialist from the hospital, medical officers of the Tihar jail were also on the call.

The AIIMS specialist was provided with a complete record of CGM (Glucose Monitoring Sensor) and the details of diet and medicines being taken by Kejriwal.

Lord Ram belongs to everyone, not only Hindus: Farooq Abdullah

STATE TIMES NEWS
RANCHI: National Conference president Farooq Abdullah said on Sunday that Lord Ram belongs to everyone, not only Hindus.

Abdullah was addressing the opposition INDIA bloc's 'Ulgulan Naya Maharally' in Ranchi.

Without naming any party, he said, "They are selling Lord Ram, claiming that they brought him. They do not know Lord Ram. He does not belong to Hindus alone but to the world. Ram is for every-

one. But they have made Ram their own, claiming He is only theirs."

Attacking the saffron party, Abdullah said that it got scared of the popularity of former chief minister Hemant Soren and Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal.

"They were put behind the bar without any fault," he said.

Kejriwal was arrested by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) on March 21 in a money laundering case linked

to the now-scrapped Delhi excise policy. He is lodged in Tihar jail.

The ED also arrested Soren on January 31 in connection with a money laundering case linked to an alleged land fraud, immediately after his resignation as the chief minister.

Abdullah appealed to people to cast their vote in favour of INDIA bloc candidates to save the country and democracy.

A total of 28 political parties took part in the rally.

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Indian envoy in Sri Lanka hosts Shri Ram Jannabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust officials

STATE TIMES NEWS
COLOMBO: India's High Commissioner to Sri Lanka Santosh Jha on Sunday hosted top officials of the Shri Ram Jannabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust and discussed ways in which India can support the development of the Ramayana Trail in the island nation.

Jha met Swami Govind Dev Giri Maharaj, the treasurer of Shri Ram Jannabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust and his team at the India House here.

The Shri Ram Jannabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust is the body responsible for the construction of the Ram temple in Ayodhya

"High Commissioner @santjha hosted Swami Govind Dev Giri Maharaj, Treasurer of Shri Ram Jannabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust & his accompanying team at India House," the Indian High Commission in Sri Lanka said in a post on X.

"Discussed ways in which India can support (the) development of #RamayanaTrail in Sri Lanka, promoting P2P (people-to-people) connect and economic growth," it said.

Jha also joined the inauguration event of the Ramayana Trail Project in Sri Lanka, endorsed by Swami Govind Dev Giri

Maharaj.

"May the #RamayanaTrail flourish as India-Sri Lanka friendship flourishes today! High Commissioner @santjha joined the inauguration event of #RamayanaTrail Project in Sri Lanka, endorsed by Swami Govind Dev Giri Maharaj, along with NSA @SagalaRatnayaka, cricket icon @Sanath07 & other dignitaries," the High Commission said in a separate post.

The Ramayana is one of the two major Sanskrit epics of ancient India and an important text of Hinduism. There are 52 sites on the Ramayana Trail in Sri Lanka.

DISTRICT POLICE HEADQUARTERS SAMBA

"LOOK OUT NOTICE"

SHO P/S Bari Brahmana vide letter 765/5-1/PSBB Dated 07-04-2024, that one person namely Mohd Saleem R/O No 06 Rajiv Colony, Tehsil Bari Brahmana District Samba has been missing since 20/03/2024 and his missing report has been entered vide DDR NO 14 dated 05-04-2024 at P/S Bari Brahmana. Through the medium of this LOOK OUT NOTICE, it is informed to all the Police Establishments/General Public that any information related to the missing person may be communicated on following contacts:-

1. PCR Samba -01923-246333, 9541649001.
2. SSP Samba's email ID : ssp@samba@jkpolice.gov.in
3. SHO P/S Bari Brahmana- 94191-38824

The description roll along with photograph of missing person is as under:-

Name:-	Mohd Saleem
Address:-	R/O No 06 Rajiv Colony, Tehsil Bari Brahmana District Samba
Age:-	40 years
Height:-	6 feet
Complexion:-	Wheatish
Face:-	Oval
Hair :-	Black
Built :-	Normal
Clothes:-	Pent and Shirt

DIP/J-207/24
Dated: 21-04-2024



Sd/-
Sr. Superintendent of Police,
Samba